THE KALHORA DYNASTY AND ITS OVERTHROW BY THE TALPUR CHIEFS OF SIND

BY
A. B. ADVANI

REPRINTED FROM THE JOURNAL OF
THE SINDH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
(Vol. 1, Part 2, 1934)

1934

Digitized by M. H. Panhwar Institute of Sindh Studies, Jamshoro.

Reprinted from

THE JOURNAL

OF

THE SIND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. I, PART II, OCTOBER, 1934.

پاران ايم ايڇ پنهور انسٽيٽيوٽ آف سنڌ اسٽڊيز، ڇامشورو.
Digitized by M. H. Panhwar Institute of Sindh Studies, Jamshoro.

THE KALHORA DYNASTY AND ITS OVERTHROW BY THE TALPUR CHIEFS OF SIND.

By A. B. Advani, M. A., LL. B.

(*Read on 20th May*, 1934)

The origin of the Abbasi Kalhoras [1] is lost into hoary antiquity. We first hear of them in the 10th century A. D. A descendant of Abbas by name Mian Odhanah, resided in Makran. Being a virtuous and pious man, a large number of followers gathered round him. One of the descendants of Mian Odhanah, Thal by name, separated from the original stock, and journeying towards the east, established himself in Kahrah Belah, the capital of Mekran. Thal's grandson Chinah or Jhunia Khan, after a dispute with his brothers, over the question of succession, left his native place, and collecting a large number of followers, penetrated further east, fixing his abode at last at the village of Khambhath. The local chief of the place received him well and made him his son-in-law. To Jhunia, a son was born, whom he named Muhammad, and this Muhammad is considered to be the latest ancestor of the Kalhoras [2]. This was in the beginning of the 13th century. From 1204 to 1557, the Jhunia family appears to have sunk into comparative obscurity. The glory of the family was revived by Adam Shah Kalhora, the ninth in descent from Muhammad [3]. Mian Adam Shah became the leader of the Kalhoras and resided in a village in Chandukah district [4]. In the year 1586, the celebrated Nawab Khan Khanan, the commander-in-chief of the Imperial army of Akbar came to Sind and gave to Adam Shah, the *zamindari* of the Chandukah district. Thus, the Kalhoras who had been religious mendicants before, now became landholders and gained strength accordingly. The landlords of the surrrounding lands, at whose expense the Kalhoras were rising into prominence, grew jealous, and at their instigation, the Kalhoras were dispersed and Mian Adam Shah, then at Multan, was put to death. His dead body, according to his dying wish, was brought to Sukkur and buried there [5]. To the present day, the hill, on which he was

1. They are called Abbasi Kalhoras, as they claim descent from Abbas, the paternal uncle of the prophet Muhammad.
2. Kalich Beg, *History of Sind*, II, p. 135.
3. McMurdo, *The History of the Kalhora Family of Sindh*, Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, (hereinafter referred to J.B.B.R.A.S.) I, p. 406.
4. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, p. 136, n. 3, writes that the parganah round about Larkana is even now called Chandko.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 136-137.

buried, is called Adam Shah-ji-Takri (Adam Shah's hill) and his tomb at Sukkur is a conspicuous object.

During the next hundred years, the power of Kalhora chiefs, slowly increased. Their attendants and adherents, having grown into a large body, the Kalhoras found it necessary to have some permanent source of income. Necessity, combined with a highly developed sense of acquisitiveness, made them possessors of lands, forcibly usurped from different landholders, who unable to cope with these sturdy saints, reported the matter to the Moghul Governors of the province of Sind. Some troops were sent against them, but the Kalhoras defeated the Imperial force. The local Moghul Governors, reported this state of things to Prince Muizud-Din, eldest son of Bahadur Shah, the Governor of Multan. The Imperial troops were despatched to Sind and after some determined fights, succeeded in putting the Kalhoras to flight. Their chief, Mian Din Muhammad Kalhora, was taken away as a prisoner and by a royal command was "chopped to pieces." Din Muhammad's brother, Mian Yar Muhammad, prudently repaired to the Moghul court. He was received with great compassion, and a *Jagir* was conferred on him. He was also given the title of "Khuda Yar Khan" or the friend of God. This occurred at the close of the 17th century [6]. By these fights the Kalhora sect, acquired a military character and "the patriarchal authority began to assume the appearance of an organized government." [7]

Though, in their eagerness to acquire temporal power, the Kalhoras often resorted to violence and rapine, yet the most remarkable thing about them was their persevering industry, in the cultivation of land. We are informed that, "Wherever they carried their lawless self-assertion, they turned wastes into productive fields and laboured hard to justify the claim that none so well as they, could make a good use of ill-gotten gains." [8] The digging of Ghar canal, near the town of Larkana by Mian Shahal Muhammad Kalhora [9], is a clear proof of the agrarian puruits of the Kalhoras. They preferred the sickle, but necessity and self-defence often made them change it for the sword. Mian Yar Muhammad, after getting the *jagir* and the title of Khuda Yar Khan, became one of the Imperial agents in Sind. His rule lasted for 18 years of which the first nine years, that is from 1700 to 1709, were full of fights, due to which, he

6. Postans, *Personal Observations on Sindh*, pp. 166-167.
7. McMurdo, *op. cit.*, J.B. B. R. A. S., I, p. 409.
8. Haig, *The Indus Delta Country*, p. 112.
9. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, p. 137.

extended his territory and increased his power [10]. The next nine years, were years of peace and plenty, except for a battle at Jhok [11] in which the Sufi mendicants of that village, were attacked and defeated by Mian Yar Muhammad [12]. He also founded the town of Khudabad, 17 miles north-west of Sehwan, which became the capital of the Kalhora Chiefs [13]. Mian Yar Muhammad died in 1718 [14] and was buried in a beautiful tomb at Khudabad—a most beautiful example of Moslem architecture in Sind. Mian Yar Muhammad Khan's reign was 'distinguished no less for activity and prudence, than by the signal success with which those were ultimately crowned.' Mian Nur Muhammad, succeeded his father Mian Yar Muhammad, but not without a struggle. His brother contested the succession for nearly three years, and this unnatural contest ceased only when Daud Khan, Mian Nur Muhammad's brother, was amply and honourably provided for. He too was given by the Emperor of Delhi—Muhammad Shah, all the *sanads* and offices granted to his father. The title of Khuda Yar Khan was also bestowed on him [15]. At this time, it may be noted, the Kalhora chief was the governor of a not very extensive portion of Sind. His territory was confined, only to some portion of Northern Sind. In 1722 Mian Nur Muhammad warred on Daudpotas [16], who had trespassed on the parganahs of Shikarpur, Khanpur and other places [17]. Twice did Mian Nur Muhammad invade Shikarpur, with the intention of reducing it, but the fort of Shikarpur was well defended, and the besiegers retired to their capital—Khudabad. After nine months, Nur Muhammad sent another large force, under the command of his brother, but this force too, was defeated and slaughtered by the Daudpotahs. These defeats did not dishearten Mian Nur Muhammad. The next year, saw another Kalhora force, marching towards Shikarpur. The chief of the Daudpotas now, was one Sadik Khan, who finding himself unable to fight with the Kalhoras, fled. "So the Kalhoras gained peaceably what they could not gain by force" [18]. After subduing the Daudpotas, in 1730, Min Nur Muhammad commenced hostilities with the Khan of Kalat, who called himself "The Royal Eagle of Kohis-

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 142-144.
11. Jhok is a small town in the Karachi district and contains the shrine of Shah Inayutallah Sufi.
12. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 132—133.
13. Haig *op. cit.*, p. 114.
14. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, p. 144.
15. McMurdo *op. cit.*, J. B. B. R. A. S. I., p. 413.
16. Aitken, *Gazetteer of Sind*, p. 107, explains that Daudpotas, or sons of Daud, trace their descent from the Abbaside Khalifas through one Amir Ahmad, who came to Sind *via* Makran and set up a kingdom.
17. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, p. 145.
18. Shahamet Ali, *History of Bhawalpur*, pp. 19-21.

tan." The expedition against the Khan of Kalat, was crowned with success. A pitched battle was fought at the village of Jandehar in 1731 in which the Royal Eagle of Kohistan—Mir Abdullah Khan was slain, and Brohis, utterly routed. Peace was made with the Brohis, and the future good connections between the Kalhoras and the Brohis were guaranteed by the two sons of Mian Nur Muhammad Khan marrying the two royal ladies of the Brohi clan [19]. In 1736, the fortress of Bukkur and its dependencies were made over to Mian Nur Muhammad, who had already acquired Sehwan; and in the next year, Nawab Sadik Ali Khan, the governor of Thatta, being unwilling to retain the charge of the place, the "*Subha* of Thatta," was also given to Mian Nur Muhammad [20]. Thus by 1737, the whole of Sind practically, came under the rule of Mian Nur Muhammad. The Kalhora rule, therefore, may be said to have started from 1737.

We have mentioned before, that the Kalhoras were addicted more to agrarian than to war-like pursuits. They, therefore, invited mercenaries from the mountainous regions to the north-west of Sind, to take service in their armies. The Baloch tribes including Talpurs, left their mountains at this invitation, and came down to Sind where they enlisted in the Kalhora army [21]. The coming of the Talpurs and other Balochis in Sind is thus described by that famous orientalist—Richard F. Burton:—

"When the Balochis arrived within fifteen miles of Khudabad, the prince sent out several of his ministers and nobles, with presents of clothes and horses with gold saddles, to receive and escort his distinguished guests to the capital. As the procession advanced, it met a troop of beggarly shepherds, followed by their flocks, and women mounted on asses. The ministers enquired for Mir Aludo and were much astonished when told that the ragged wayfarer with the *Dheri* [22] in his hand and the *Kambo* [23] on his shoulders, was the personage whom they were sent to conduct with such ceremony. However, they saluted him with courtesy, took the *Dheri* and *Kambo* from him, mounted him upon the best horse and accompanied him on his way to the capital." [24]

19. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 146-147.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
21. *Alienations in Sind*, I, pp. 1-2.
22. Dheri is a bit of stone or other such material, round which the raw wool thread is [twisted.
23. Kambo is a long cloth thrown over the right shoulder, and so fastened round the waist as to leave a place for the lambs that are too young to walk.
24. Burton, *Sind and the Races that inhabit the Valley of the Indus*, p. 235.

The above story, of the Talpurs being originally shepherds and goatherds, supports the etymological theory advanced by Ansari. The word "Talpur," he asseverates, is a corrupted form of the word "Thal-Bur," which in Persian language means, the "cutter of branches," a task generally done by shepherds and goatherds. [25]

The latter Talpur chiefs, deprecated this theory about their humble origin, and were emphatic, that they were of the Arab origin, and were descended from "Amir Hamzah, the son of Hasham, the son of Abul-Munaf." [26] Whether of humble origin or of Arab pedigree, is not so much to the point as the rise of the Talpurs to eminence. The immediate common ancestor of the Talpurs, was one Kuka or Begam. One of his sons Hotak, begot a son, Shahdad by name. [27] This Shahdad Khan, left his paternal home on account of some difference of opinion with his paternal uncle Mir Sobdar. He migrated to the plains of Sind, where he took service with the Kalhora chief, Mian Yar Mahommad. [28] A large number of Balochis followed him. Extensive lands wrere given to them, on account of their military service, in the neighbourhood of Brahmanabad. Shahdadpur, [29] called after this Mir Shahdad, became their headquarters. [30] This must have occurred at the close of the 17th century or in the beginning of the 18th century, when Mir Shadad Khan is heard for the first time, fighting bravely in the Derah Ghazi Khan and Derah Ismail Khan, on behalf of Prince Muizzudin. On account of his bravery his position was raised and favours bestowed on him. [31] Mir Shahdad, gradually became the chief adviser of Mian Yar Mahommed Khan, and 'acquired a great deal of influence in political affairs' [32]. Mir Shahdad died in 1734, and one of his sons, Mir Bahram, served Mian Nur Mahommed Kalhora faithfully and well [33]. Hardly had Mian Nur Mahommed enjoyed his rule for one year, when he heard of the mighty Persian host, under the leadership of Nadir Shah, rushing like a mighty torrent from the North-West, and sweeping away everything before it. Nadir Shah, it is narrated got angry, at the refusal of the Moghul Emperor—Mahommed Shah, to deliver up some fugitives who had fled and found asy-

25. Ansari, *Muslman Races found in Sind*, p.29.
26. An Ex-Political, *Dry Leaves from Young Egypt*, p. 358.
27. *Alienations in Sind*, II, p. 79.
28. An Ex-Political, *op. cit.*, p. 359.
29. Shahdadpur, the chief town of Shahdadpur Taluka, is at a distance of forty miles north-east to Hyderabad in Sind.
30. *Alienations in Sind*, I, p. 2.
31. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 143-144.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 165.
33. *Alienations in Sind*, II, pp. 79-80.

lum in India. The rapid march of Nadir, the defeat of the "effiminate" Indian army, the general massacre in the streets of Delhi, and the plunder of every conceivable article in Delhi for 35 days [34], are matters too well-known to need any elaboration. On the 22nd April, 1739, the Moghul Emperor, Mahommed Shah, concluded a treaty with Nadir Shah, by which he ceded to him all the territories to the westward of the "River Attock." He made over to Nadir Shah, "The Castle Buckar, Sunker, and Khoudabad, the rest of the Territories, Passes, and Abodes of the Chokias, Ballches, etc., with Province of Tatta, etc." [35] Mian Nur Mahommed did not approve of this cession of Sind to Nadir Shah, by the Emperor of Delhi, as the ceded lands formed his territory, and he committed the blunder, of refusing to recognise Nadir Shah, as his sovereign. [36] When Nadir Shah came to know of this, he left Kabul on the 27th November, 1739, and marched towards Sind. On the 1st of February, 1740, he reached Larkana, where he learnt that Mian Nur Mahommed had fled to Umarkot, with his treasure. Mian Nur Mahommed imagined that the desert, the forests and lack of proper roads in Sind, would prove too much for Nadir Shah, who would therefore fail to reach him in the desert fastness of Umarkot. The army of Nadir Shah, however, marched towards the desert, and on the 16th February, 1740, at 3 o'clock, arrived in the neighbourhood of Umarkot. Mian Nur Mahommed was captured by the Persian advance-guard and the poor fellow was made to disgorge all his wealth, which he had buried in the underground cellars of the fort of Umarkot. This hidden treasure amounted to one crore of rupees. The Persian host left Umarkot, with Mian Nur Mahommed in chains and reached Larkana on the 3rd of March, 1740. Nadir Shah pardoned the Mian, and restored back to him only Lower and Central Sind. The country, bordering Baluchistan was given over to Muhbat Khan, the chief of that province, and Shikarpur was given to the Daudpotas. [37] This was not all. A further penalty of an annual tribute of twenty lakhs was imposed on Mian Nur Mahommed, and his two sons—Mahommd Murad Yab Khan and Ghulam Shah Khan, were taken away by Nadir Shah with himself, as hostages. After giving Mian Nur Mahommed, the title of Shah Kuli Khan, Nadir Shah and his army left Sind. [38] Nadir Shah's invasion of Sind, had disorganised the peaceful Government of the country, and some local tribes had shaken

34. Murray, *History of British India*, pp. 272-274.
35. Fraser, *The History of Nadir Shah*, pp. 223-226.
36. Haig, *op. cit.*, p. 116.
37. Jones, *Histoire de Nader Chah*, II, pp. 88-94.
38. McMurdo, *op. cit.*, J. B. B. R. A. S., I, p. 417.

off their yoke of obedience. The year 1741 was therefore spent in punishing these rebellious tribes. In 1743, Nadir Shah sent Thamas Kuli Khan to Sind to punish the Daudpotas. Mian Nur Mahommed deemed it wise, to remain quiet and not take part in any matter. This resulted into anarchy, as there was practically no Government in the country. After some time, the Mian went to the camp of Thamas Kuli Khan and was given back his authority. But Thamas Kuli Khan, compelled him to give his third son, Attur Khan, as hostage. During the next three years, after the departure of Thamas Kuli Khan, the Hindu chiefs of Kakralla and Dharaja [39] were chastised and subdued, and once more, the Kalhora authority was established in Sind. [40]

Nadir Shah was assassinated in 1747 and his Afghanistan territory was seized and retained by Ahmed Shah Abdali. [41] This new sovereign and successor of Nadir Shah, confirmed Mian Nur Mahommd afresh as the ruler of Sind, and gave him the title of Shah Nawab Khan. Soon after this, Mian Nur Mahommed's three sons returned from Persia, where they had remained as hostages [42]. Ahmed Shah Abdali, the founder of the Government of Duranis, was for the first few years of his rule, too much occupied with greater affairs than Sind and Mian Nur Mahommed taking advantage of this opportunity, stopped paying the annual tribute of twenty lakhs of rupees, fixed by Nadir Shah [43].

In 1754, King Ahmed Shah, advanced towards Sind, to enforce the payment of the annual tribute, which, as mentiond above, the Mian had foolishly evaded. The Mian fled to Jesulmir, where he died "of quinsy or the inflammation of the throat." [44] After the death of Mian Nur Mahommed in 1755, his eldest son, Mahommd Murad Yab Khan, succeeded him on the throne, which he enjoyed for only a short time. Ahmed Shah Abdali not only confirmed him in the rank and power of his father, but conferred on him the title of Sirbuland Khan. Mian Mahommed Murad Yab Khan's rule or misrule did not last long. He ill treated the noblemen and oppressed his subjects, with the result that he was deposed and his brother, Mian Ghulam Shah, was seated on the *Gadi* [45]. His another brother Mian Atur Khan, resented this and personally represented his case before

39. Bulchand, *History of Sind*, p. 27, identifies these two places as parts of Mirpur Bathoro and Mirpur Sakro Talukas, now.
40. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 149-150.
41. Haig, *op. cit.*, p. 117.
42. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, p. 151.
43. Haig, *op. and loc. cit.*
44. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, p. 152.
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 153-155.

the Durani king—Ahmed Shah. He succeeded in getting *Firman* from the king, appointing him as the ruler of Sind, instead of Ghulam Shah. Atur Khan was joined by his brother, Ahmed Yar Khan and both of them proceeded to Sind. Atur Khan being armed with the Royal Seal and a body of Afghan soldiers, the people of Sind deserted the cause of Mian Ghulam Shah, and turned towards the new nominee. The result was that having no other alternative, Mian Ghulam Shah fled to desert. [46] Then followed a period of incessant warfare bestween Ghulam Shah on one side, and his two brothers—Attur Khan and Ahmed Yar Khan on the other, in which, Ghulam Shah ultimately became victorious [47]. It is from 1762, that Mian Ghulam Shah's rule may be said to have commenced, as it was in this year, that he was confirmed as the ruler of Sind by the royal *Firman.* Along with the royal *Firman*, Ahmed Shah bestowed on him the title of "Shah Wardi Khan," an elephant, a robe of honour and many other presents [48]. The rule of Mian Ghulam Shah marks the zenith of the glory of the Kalhora rule. He was the most capable and vigorous of the Kalhora rulers. His brilliant career, and vigorous rule, arouses further admiration, when it is learnt that he was absolutely illiterate and was of lowly birth. If the oral tradition, quite popular in Sind, is to be given credence, then Mian Ghulam Shah, was a gift of Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai, a local saint and poet who flourished in the days of Mian Nur Mahommed. Mir Nur Mahommed, according to tradition, possessed a beautiful dancing girl—Gulan. This girl was wont to dance before the famous poet, every Friday night, with exquisite grace. On one such occasion, when Gulan had danced with great artistry and abandon, the poet was so pleased with her, that he desired her to ask him for anything. The dancer modestly asked for a son, and the poet, being endowed with supernatural powers, blessed her and promised her a son. In due course of time, the story runs, Mian Ghulam Shah was born to Gulan, and the saintly poet blessed the child, prophesying his greatness by saying :—

گلان مان گل ٻڌا ٽيو، ڪي ٽڙيو ڪي ٽرندو.

There being nobody to subdue in Sind, and nothing to conquer, Mian Ghulam Shah turned his covetous eyes, after his ascension in 1762, to the Cutch territory. (49) In 1763 Mian Ghulam Shah marched towards Cutch, conquering the frontier fort

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 155-156.
47. Haig., *op. cit.*, pp. 117-118.
48. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, p. 161.
49. Haig, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

of Sindri on the way [50]. On the heights of Jarah [51] was fought a terrible battle between the Sind army and the Rajputs of Cutch. The Rajputs, according to their time-honoured custom, cut the throats of all their ladies and then donning saffron robes, came out to fight unto death. For six hours in a thick fog which obscured the light of day, the battle went on, and so terrible was the slaughter that "stones a pound in weight, were moved from the side of the hill, by the streams of blood." The loss of both the armies was considerable, and in the evening, both the armies, made a "precipitate retreat." Next year, Mian Ghulam Shah again invaded Cutch and arrived near the capital of Cutch. The Rao of Cutch, however, sued for peace and pacified the Mian, by offering him his two seaports of Basta and Lakhpat, on the borders of Sind. In 1765, on account of his bravery and successfully managing the affairs of Sind, Mian Ghulam Shah received a fresh title of "Shams-ud-Dawlat" or "The Sword of the State," from the king [52]. Two more facts, require to be noticed, in the career of Mian Ghulam Shah, namely, his founding the modern town of Hyderabad (in Sind) and his matrimonial connections with the Rao of Cutch. Khudabad, the capital city of the Kalhoras, had soon after its founding in the beginning of the eighteenth century, been abandoned. Each successive Kalhora chief, had thereafter founded a new capital, which, either to some idle whim or danger from the summer floods of the Indus, had to be abandoned. Thus Khudabad [53] Muradabad [54] Allahabad, [55] and Shahgarh [56] became capital towns for a short time, only to be deserted for new ones. In 1768, Mian Ghulam Shah decided to change his capital. He chose the site of old Nerun Kot, on the left bank of the Indus, which, since many centuries used to be called Nerun Kafri or the Nerun of the Infidels. The range of Ganja hills, lying far above the Indus innundations, with the newly formed Phuleli river washing its base, guaranteed security and permanence, and the northern spur of the low range of Ganja hill, was selected for building the new capital. The graves of certain Pirs or holy men, and the shapeless rubbish that once upon a time was the old fort of Nerun, were cleared away and a large fort was built on the site. And to this newly built capital, Mian Ghulam Shah removed his court in 1770 and called it Hyderabad. [57] In the same year, good connections between

50. Kalich Beg, *op. and loc. cit.*
51. This place is twenty-miles north-east of Lakhpat Bundar in Cutch.
52. McMurdo, *op. cit.*, J. B. B. R. A. S., I, pp.423-424.
53. Kalich Beg, *op, cit.*, II, p. 142.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 154.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 155.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
57. Haig, *op. cit.*, p. 119-121.

the Rao of Cutch and Mian Ghulam Shah were established by matrimonial relationship. The Rao of Cutch gave Mian Ghulam Shah, the daughter of one of his cousins, in marriage. [58] It appears that the Mian wanted, the Rao's sister in marriage, but later on was content to have the daughter of the chief of Khanker [59]. The seaports of Basta and Lakhpat, were returned to the Rao, by the highly pleased Mian, in consideration of this marriage.

In 1772, several tombs, situated on a hillock to the south-west of the fort of Hyderabad, were razed to the ground, by Mian Ghulam Shah's orders, with a view to construct a small mud fort on the cleared ground ; while this mud fort was being built, the Mian was suddenly smitten with paralysis, which proved fatal. In two days' time, he was dead. His death, which took place on the 2nd August, 1772, was attributed, by the superstitious people, to the sacrilege he had committed, in destroying the graves of the venerated saints on Shah Makai's hillock, to build his mud-fort there [60]. He was buried in a beautiful tomb, to the northern extremity of the town of Hyderabad. This tomb, "though sadly dilapidated, is by far the finest and was selected by Lord Curzon as the only one that deserved to be restored and kept in repair at the public expense" [61]. On the next day, after Mian Ghulam Shah's death, his son, Mian Mahommed Surfraz Khan, was seated on the throne. King Taimur Shah, who had succeeded to the throne of Kandhar, after the death of his father—Ahmad Shah Durani, recognised the Mian, as the new ruler of Sind, by sending him a robe of honour and conferring on him the title of "Khuda Yar Khan" [62]. After settling the affairs in the northern districts of his territory, Mian Mahommed Sarfraz Khan led his army to Cutch, the ruler of which country, welcomed the Mian. This submissive attitude of the Rao of Cutch pleased the Mian, who left the Rao in peace and went towards Gujrat. The Jarejah chief of that province, too, submitted. Then the Mian returned back to Sind. [63] The submissive attitude of the Rao of Cutch and the Jarejah Chief, is a statement by the Mahommedan historian, which admits of some doubt. Dr. Burnes has clearly stated in his book, "A Narrative of a Visit to Court of Scinde," that Mian Sarfraz Khan invaded Cutch twice leaving behind a desolate and plundered country. [64] Had the attitude of the Rao of Cutch

58. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, p. 163.
59. Burnes, *A Narrative of a Visit to the Court of Sinde*, p. 151.
60. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 163-164.
61. Aitken, *Gaz. of Sind*, p. 113.
62. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, p. 164.
63. *Loc. cit.*
64. Burnes, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

been submissive and humble, the entry of Sind army in Cutch, would have been peaceful and there would not have been any devastation or desolation in its wake.

The Talpurs it will be remembered had risen to power in the days of Mian Yar Mahommed, in the beginning of the 18th century. After the death of Mir Shahdad Khan Talpur in 1734, his son Mir Bahram, had continued to serve Mian Nur Mahommed, as faithfully as his father. [65] Mir Bahram, through ability, had come to occupy a very prominent position in the political affairs of Sind. It was through him, that Mian Mahommed Murad Yar Khan was dethroned in favour of Mian Ghulam Shah [66]. On account of this, he had won the respect of Mian Ghulam Shah. After Mian Ghulam Shah's death, Mir Bahram Khan continued to serve the Kalhora family, now represented by Mian Mahommed Sarfraz Khan. One of the courtiers of the Mian, by name Rajah Likhi, began to sow the seeds of distrust in the heart of the Mian, against Mir Bahram Khan. Mian Sarfraz Khan was not a fool, but the strategy of Rajah Likhi slowly began to work. The Mian began to evince distrust of the Mir and gradually became cold towards him. The advice of Diwan Gidumal [67], Mian Sarfraz Khan's faithful minister was not listened to, and the efforts of this Hindu minister, to bring about a reconciliation between the Mian and Mir Bahram Khan, failed.

Mir Bahram was a shrewd person and he felt that his life was in danger. He therefore called his two sons—Bijar Khan and Sobdar Khan, in his presence, and told them that he felt, he would soon be destroyed by Mian Sarfraz Khan. "You know we have sworn on the Koran to be faithful to him (Mian Sarfraz Khan) and he has sworn to be kind to us. If now, without any reason he causes some harm to us, we must quietly bear it, leaving him to the punishment of God." The two sons were told, to escape and save their lives, while the going was good, leaving their aged father to his fate. The eldest son took the hint and started on a pilgrimage to Mecca [68], but the younger son—Mir Sobdar Khan, preferred to stay with his father, and die along with him, if the matters came to a push. One day after this, Mir Bahram Khan went to the royal court, to pay his usual

65. Cf., *supra.*

66. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, p. 165.

67. This Hindu gentleman, according to Bherumal, *Anulan-jo-Ahwal*, pp. 40-41, was the actual founder of the town of Hyderabad Sind. Mian Ghulam Shah gave him the necessary money, and he built the fort of Hyderabad.

68. Mir Bijar's conduct is rather surprising. Knowing that his father's life was in danger, he still went away to Mecca, to save his own life obviously. The only conclusion, for his lack of filial regard, according to me, is the bad spirit existing between the father and the son.

respects. Mian Sarfraz Khan gave him a letter to read, telling him that it was from his son Mir Bijar. While Mir Bahram was reading the letter, a servant, at a previously arranged signal, drew out his sword, and killed the aged Mir Bahram Khan. Mir Sobdar Khan, who was standing outside, was then besieged by some courtiers and cut to pieces, but not before his strong hand had knocked off few heads. This event occurred in the year 1774 [69]. Mir Bijar Khan being away on pilgrimage, his cousin Mir Fateh Khan, collected an army of Baloches, with a view to punish the treacherous Kalhora chief—Mian Sarfraz Khan. He attacked the fort of Khudabad,but Mian Muhammed Sarfraz Khan, fearing the wrath of the infuriated Baloches, secretly fled from the Khudabad fort, and sailing hastily in a fisherman's boat, he reached the fort of Hyderabad. After his flight, his adherents placed Mian Sarfraz Khan's brother—Mahommed Khan on the throne. Mahommed Khan was a ruler only in name because the real power lay in the hands of Rajah Likhi. Mir Fateh Khan, after having taken his revenge, retired to Shahdadpur, the capital of the Baloches.

The incapacity of Mian Mahommed Khan made a change in the rulers necessary, and the choice of Rajah Likhi and his companions, fell on Mian Ghulam Nabi, who was a brother of the deceased Mian Ghulam Shah. In 1777, Mian Mahommed Khan was compelled to vacate the throne for his uncle—Mian Ghulam Nabi [70]. At this time Bijir Khan returnd from his pilgrimage and summoned the Baloches to aid him in avenging the murders of his father and brother [71]. The evil counsellors of Mian Ghulam Nabi, prepared to march out, and fight with Mir Bijar. This was against Mian Ghulam Nabi's wishes, who being a peace-loving man, suggested that peace be made with Mir Bijar. To this, his counsellors would not listen and he was compelled to go with them and fight. At Lanyari in the Shahdadpur *taluka*, a battle was fought, between the Baloches and the Mian's army. When the Mian saw his soldiers losing ground, he sent a message to Mir Bijar, requesting him to get him out of the difficulty, as he felt himself quite helpless in the hands of Rajah Likhi, [72] and his other counsellors. When these wicked men came to know of this, they became very angry and murdered the Mian. The Kalhora army was defeated and Tajah Likhi and others of his band fled. In the Hyderabad fort at this time, Mian Abdun-

69. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, 166-168.
70. *Ibid.*, pp. 168-170.
71. Haig, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
72. This Tajah Likhi was the son of Rajah Likhi. He had taken his father's place after the latter's death, which according to Kalich Beg, *History of Sind*, II, p. 170, was due to fear, at thenews of the coming back to Sind of Mir Bijar Khan.

nabi, a brother of the murdered Mian Ghulam Nabi, had the charge of four royal prisoners. They were Mian Sarfraz Khan, his two sons, and his brother Mahmud Khan who had been deposed in favour of Mian Ghulam Nabi. Learning of Mian Ghulam Nabi's death, Mian Abdunnabi killed all these four prisoners and thus removed his possible rivals for the throne of Sind. After the battle of Lanyari, Mir Bijar laid siege to the fort of Hyderabad, which Mian Abdunnabi stoutly defended. Peace was however made between the two, by which the throne was given to Mian Abdunnabi, and Mir Bijar became his chief minister [73]. During the reign of Mian Abdunnabi, Sind was invaded by the army of King Taimur, under the leadership of Izzat Yar Khan Abbasi, who had obtained from king Taimur, the rulership of Sind, to the exclusion of Mian Abdunnabi. A battle took place in 1781, near Shikarpur, between the Afghan army and the Sind force, in which after much bloodshed, the Afghan army was defeated. At this, king Taimur was so incensed that he personally marched against Sind. Mir Bijar Khan was not only brave but tactful too. He went forward to pacify the king and succeeded in doing so, with the result that the angry monarch not only went back to his country pleased, but he confirmed Mian Abdunnabi as the ruler of Sind [74]. On account of his ability and political sagacity, Mir Bijar came to be the real ruler in the land, Mian Abdunnabi being merely a puppet. The result was that Mian Abdunnabi began to chafe under the tutelage in which he was held. [75]

In 1781, one day, two Rajputs came to Mir Bijar, telling him that they had brought for him a confidential letter from the Maharaja of Jodhpur. Mir Bijar went to a private room, accompanied by these two Rajputs, from Jodhpur. As he was busy reading the letter, these two Rajputs taking their daggers, plunged them in the sides of Mir Bijar, who jumped up at this assault, and cut these treacherous Hindus into pieces, with his sword. But the dagger blows he had received, proved fatal and he too fell down dead [76]. What could have been the object of this murder? One theory is that Mian Abdunnabi fearing the growing power of Mir Bijar, hired two assassins from the Maharaja of Jodhpur, for the removal of this Baloch warrior, the consideration for this foul deed being the fort of Umarkot, which was given to the Maharaja of Jodhpur [77]. According to another historian, this murder was committed, not at the instigation

73. *Ibid.*, pp. 171-176.
74. *Ibid.*, pp. 175-178.
75. McMurdo, *op. cit.*, J. B. B. R. A. S., I, p. 427.
76. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 178-179.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 180, n. 1.

of Mian Abdunnabi, but his mother, in whose heart, the murder of her son—Mian Ghulam Nabi, in the battle of Lanyari, had caused the birth of bitter feelings against Mir Bijar, whom somehow she held responsible for her son's death. She communicated her grievances to Maharaja Bijaising of Jodhpur, who undertook to help her. He sent two Rajputs to Sind to murder Bijar Khan, promising their families, in case they perished in their task, an annual *jagir* of Rs. 30,000 [78]. Lieut.-Col. James Tod, advances another theory, which exonerates Mian Abdunnabi, from having any hand, in the murder of Mir Bijar. Mir Bijar, according to Tod, had been presumptuous in demanding a daughter of the royal family of Marwar, to be his wife. Maharaja Bijaising, smarting under this insult, hired two assassins to destroy Mir Bijar, which they successfully did, at the cost of their own lives [79]. But if the motive for this murder is clouded with doubt, the deed anyway is clear.

After the death of Mir Bijar, his son—Mir Abdullah became the head of the Baloch tribe. Accompanied by his relatives, he went to Mian Abdunnabi, to pay the customary respects. But Mian Abdunnabi being guilty, feared revenge at the hands of the Baloches. He therefore fled to Kalat, with his treasure and confidential servants. The throne being vacant, Mir Abdullah selected one Sadik Ali, a kinsman of the Kalhora rulers, and placed the turban of rulership [80] on his head. Sadik Ali being religiously inclined, took little or no interest in the mundane affairs like the gorvernment of Sind. The result was that Mir Abdullah became the real ruler of the land, to the satisfaction of the people [81]. Mian Abdunnabi wanted to get back the rulership of Sind, so he appealed to Nasir Khan of Kalat, and Maharajah of Jodhpur for aid. The result was that two armies, one of Kalat and the other from Jodhpur, began to march on Sind, from the north and the east. Mir Abdullah prepared his army and marched out to oppose the Jodhpur army, which he totally defeated, gaining much booty. Without taking any rest, Mir Abdullah marched against the Kalat army, which also he defeated causing Mian Abdunnabi to fly for his life to Kalat [82]. While at Kalat, Mian Abdunnabi heard of the coming of the famous Afghan Chief—Sardar Madad Khan to

78. Shahamet Ali, *History of Bhawalpur*, pp. 65-66.
79. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, III, (1920 Edition) p. 1289.
80. Turban is the common head-gear in Sind. One of the customs, on the ascension of a new ruler on the throne was the tying of "*Pugree*" round the head of the ruler by his minister or the most important person at the court in recognition of his having become the king. This was a typical Muhammadan custom, to which great importance used to be attached.
81. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, 179-181.
82. *Ibid.*, pp. 181-184.

Bhawalpur. He solicited the Afghan Chief's help for getting back Sind. King Taimur Shah also wrote to Madad Khan, to take the Afghan army to Sind. Madad Khan rushed on Sind like a hurricane, devastating the country from the north to the south. Madad Khan's sole object was to obtain the treasure and the loot which Mian Abdunnabi had pomised him. When these were not forthcoming, he commenced plundering towns and villages. Then commenced a reign of terror, the like of which had not ben seen or heard of before in Sind. Rich or poor, high or low, irrespective of sex, all were mercilessly beaten and deprived, as the native historian puts it, of all their property, "even to the clothes on their persons, to the shoes in their feet, and to the mats in their houses" [83]. "Madad Khan," writes Elphinstone, "laid waste the country with fire and sword; and so severe were his ravages, that a dreadful famine followed his campaign, and the province of Sind, is said not yet to have recovered from what it suffered on that occasion." [84] Mir Abdullah and other Talpur chiefs, negotiated for peace but found out that Madad Khan intended treachery, so they prepared to fight with him. But Madad Khan and his savage Afghans, satiated with blood and ruin, left Sind for ever, leaving Mian Abdunnabi to shift for himself as best as he could [85]. Mian Abdunnabi now sought to be reconciled to Mir Abdullah Khan. This he successfully effected by sending the *Koran* to Mir Abdullah on the margin of which he wrote, "I hereby commit to writing and swear by the word of God that henceforth, I shall remain true to the Mir and will not prove treacherous." [86] On this sacred promise, the reconciliation was brought about between the Mian and the Mir, but the Kalhora family was ill-fated. Hardly had the reconciliation been effected, and peace and good will restored, when Mian Abdunnabi began to seek an opportunity, to have Mir Abdullah Khan murdered. And he had not long to wait. . One day when Mir Abdullah and Mir Fateh Khan, the two Talpur chiefs, went to the court of the Kalhora chief, they were asked by the attendants at the gate, to unbuckle their swords, and enter the court unarmed. The Mirs thought that either it was a foul plan or the Mian was merely testing them. They bravely handed over their swords, but as soon as this was done, they both were surrounded by the Mian's men who immediately made them prisoners. The captive Mirs now realized that their end was near; so they started reciting the *Koran.* An executioner came on the scene and cut off their

83. *Ibid.*, pp. 184-185 and 187.
84. Elphinstone, *Kaubool*, p. 561.
85. Kalich Beg, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 186 and 189-191.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

heads. This butchery took place in 1783. [87] This was the last proverbial straw which broke the Talpur camel's back. Again and again had the Talpurs reinstated the treacherous Kalhoras to power, forgetting their feelings of revenge and repeatedly they had experienced ingratitude for their good will, and treachery for their faithfulness. Under the leadership of Mir Fateh Ali Khan (grandson of Mir Bahram who had been murdered in 1774), the Baloches rose and engaged the force of Mian Abdunnabi, in the battle of Halani, defeating it. This battle took place in 1783 [88]. For the next few years Mian Abdunnabi strove hard and repeatedly to get back the Sind rulership. He returned to Sind, with the help of the Kalat army, which after plundering Abdunnabi's own camp, in lieu of pay and provisions, deserted him and went back to Kalat. The dejected Mian then went before Taimur Shah of Afghanistan, pleading for aid against Mir Fateh Ali Khan and other Talpur Chiefs. When this news was received in Sind, Mir Fateh Ali Khan, sent his envoys to the royal court, to represent his case. Taimur Shah, at last divided Sind, into two halves, bestowing one half on Mir Fateh Ali Khan, and the other on Mian Abdunnabi. An arbitrator and an Afghan army were despatched to Sind, to reinstate Mian Abdunnabi. The Mir's envoys had not been idle all this time, at the royal court. They at last pursuaded Taimur Shah to issue a *firman*, appointing Mir Fateh Ali Khan as the ruler of the whole Sind and ordering Mian Abdunnabi to desist from attacking or invading Sind. [89] It is learnt that the consideration for obtaining this *firman*, in favour of Mir Fateh Ali Khan, was nine lacs of rupees in cash [90]. The chagrin and despair of Mian Abdunnabi, should rather be left to the imagination of the reader, than described. After wandering from place to place, he finally settled at Jodhpur, wher he was well received, [91] and where, to the present day, his descendants reside, as middle-class Jagirdars.

In 1793, Taimur Shah died and his son—Zaman Shah, succeeded him. The Talpur chiefs, who had ruled Sind now, for about 10 years, received recognition from him, as the rulers of Sind. [92] Thus ended finally the Kalhora rule, so promisingly started by Mian Nur Muhammed, and so gloriously maintained by his worthy son—Mian Ghulam Shah.

87. *Ibid.*, pp. 192-193.
88. *Ibid.*, pp. 193-195.
89. *Ibid.*, pp. 198-202.
90. Shahmet Ali, *op., cit.* p. 70.
91. McMurdo, *op. cit.*, J. B. B. R. A. S., I, p. 430.
92. Kalich Beg *op. cit.*, II, p. 206.

A general review of the Kalhora dynasty, makes one wonder, at the folly and villainy, which both in the case of the latter Kalhoras, are found striving hard for pre-eminence. For a period of three centuries, these religious mendicants, struggled for greatness, and hardly had that object, so ardently sought for, been attained, when by their folly and overweening ambition, they were hurled back in 1783, to their original obscurity. The latter Kalhoras were neither imbeciles, nor thorough sadists. How then explain their murders? We believe that they were driven to these treacherous murders, by a latent fear, inspired by the growing power of the Talpurs, that they were going to lose their rulership. That explanation makes their actions credible, though not creditable.

With the recognition of Mir Fateh Ali Khan by Zaman Shah in 1793, as the ruler of Sind, the pretensions of the Kalhoras were finally ended, and the Talpur rule commenced.

Digitized by M. H. Panhwar Institute of Sindh Studies, Jamshoro.